



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
Minutes  
March 12, 2019**

**Commission Present:** Bossange, Kaplan, Pierce, Hurley and Healy

**Staff Present:** Wight, and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:32 p.m. by Commission Chair Kaplan

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion was made to approve the agenda by Bossange, second by Pierce, motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Healy read aloud with the motions included, motion made to approve the consent agenda by Bossange, second by Pierce, motion carried.

Kaplan explained to the members, Hale would not be seeking reappointment to the Commission when her term expires on June 30th.

**Suggested Drone Policy**

Wight explained BPRW did not currently have a policy, suggested a policy very similar to Vermont parks, to include slight addition of making sure registered with FAA as most all parks are in air space.

Bossange suggested changing wording after aircraft, to include unmanned.

Wight worked through the wording with the commission suggestions to read, "Aircraft, including unmanned aerial vehicles commonly known as drones, are not allowed in Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Parks and Open Spaces without a park permit except in an emergency. In order for the permit to be approved the aircraft must have an FAA license/approval." All were in favor of these suggestions and will put on the April agenda for action.

**Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00 PM)**

Public forum opened at 6:10 p.m. by Commission Chair Kaplan.

Seeing nobody, the public forum closed.

Public forum closed at 6:10 p.m.

**E-bikes and Speed Limits**

Wight spoke to a memo that she had put before the public previously and waited for feedback to see how it went, decided to draft up what effects BPRW and specifically in charge of. 80% of public were in favor of allowing on the bikepath and the biggest request was to have a speed limit and rules of etiquette.

Bossange stated he was only agreeable to class 1 pedal assist vehicles, Wight was concerned with who is going to manage what is being used. Throttle versus pedal assist is subtle and has more of a use for



getting through traffic a bit quicker. Bossange asked for clarification and suggested getting rid of the classes and make more about a speed limit. Review as technology progresses.

All discussed the maximum speed and all agreed to have at 15 mph.

Kaplan stated there had been vigorous conversation regarding allowing ebikes on the waterfront and that it is not in the purview of the commission to make those decisions. Businesses are worried about losing business to public entities. Wight stated that the commission could make a decision on scooters on the path. Pierce felt it would be very dangerous if people left the rentals on the path. Wight said all ebikes and scooters that are ride share can be geo programmed to drop the speed in a specific area, can have controls on them. Wight will revised and bring to the April meeting for action.

### **Burlington Segway Contract**

Wight showed the proposed agreement from Rick Sharp, Burlington Segways, Inc. Wanted to clarify the 5% gross receipts was for the tours on Segway's only. Concerned the business is paying 5% of the total business, which included ebike rentals, should only include a percentage for Segway tours on the bikepath. All agreed that the fees charged should not include rental of ebikes, only the Segway tours should be charged a gross receipts charge. Wight will explain this to Rick Sharp.

### **BTVStat February Presentation**

Wight explained that every month a specific department report out at the Department heads meeting, BPRW reports 3 times per year, sometimes report on something requested by Mayor or follow-up from prior information. Great to get feedback.

Specifically it was brought up that from 2016-18 Penny for Parks funding received was not spent, it was discovered that because staff were in transition projects got off track. One of the projects that came up during that timeframe was a softball field in the New North end, but the group was not ready yet and was put aside for another year, the Mayor requested in the future he would like to spend money on another upcoming project to do in place for that current year. Staff took note of and would look at a future project to make sure funds are being spent each year. Also need to work on getting community input and more involved. Safavi will be working on more inclusion from the public and the scoring system.

Discussed how the parks rate regarding having a park within 10 minutes/10 mile walk, doing very well, UVM campus will be included, Burlington Country Club Golf course would not be included as it is only available in winter for public use, Starr Farm would also be included as Northshore has a path, school playgrounds are also not included on map, in good shape, at approximately 83.8%, keep what we have in good shape and maintained and do not need to focus on acquisition of more land.

Pierce asked where Burlington ranks among other similar cities and Wight said would have to look at comparable cities to Burlington and did not personally know but would send a link out to all for comparisons.

Stewardship, how much in donations and sponsorships, most in kind is advertising, added that the Parks Foundation is raising more money.



Kaplan opened up for questions and said the Parks and Cemetery Commissions should be added to the list of volunteers, she also added that she liked the Tree Canopy section of information, In 2016 Burlington's tree cover canopy was 42% and the arborist stated it was above that currently. Currently doing stump grinding to get more locations to plant new trees. Wight is looking into the availability for carbon credits and will let the commission know her findings.

Kaplan stated great information for all the public that come to the meetings to hear the information and Wight said that the Mayor's Office will put out to the public and how a lot of great work has come from all departments. Wood collects all the information for the reports and then puts all the information together in one report that is very readable. Kaplan would like to have quarterly updates when stats are done, Wight said the next reports would be in the beginning of August and then again in November and would also share the feedback from the presentations.

#### **Update on Parks Foundation (Standing Item)**

Bossange did not have an update on the parks foundation.

Wight said that in November the national training school is having a Park Foundation conference meeting and would be happy to attend with whomever would like to attend from the Foundation. Bossange said he would speak with other foundation members to see if any interest.

#### **Director's Items**

Wight updated the department had closed on the 311 North Avenue property, officially own and the City has been reimbursed \$500,000, will see one more small bill from the Land Trust, meeting end of March for use of the Stone House. Due to the restrictions cannot have a library but could do a partnership, possibly computers, a meeting space, rotating collection of books that are related to outdoors, gardening etc. Will always have to serve and be accessible to outdoor and public.

Working on the budget piece of the City Hall Park project, goal is to go to the City Council on the 25th about the final cost and how paying for. Mayor feels if it does not happen on the 25<sup>th</sup> it will not happen at all. Public information the City was sued, precedence was in appropriately using money to pay for but not under contract.

Two positions are currently vacant in the department, advertised for Recreation Specialist and Marina Manager & Deputy Harbor Master, also grounds foreman just retired and will need to be posted soon.

#### **Commissioner's Items**

Healy said she saw the Farmers Market is officially found a place on Pine Street to operate for the season. Wight explained the timing would be good when City Hall Park is ready for them to come back.

Kaplan explained Burlington Wild Ways had a meeting mainly about connectivity of green spaces in Burlington and the importance of keeping them going well, Zoe Richards and Richard Dean discussed and encouraged others to go to the [burlingtonwildways.org](http://burlingtonwildways.org) and get involved with the organization. Mark trails and make maps was the main focus of the group, well worth the time.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 7:01 p.m. by Pierce, second by Healy, motion carried.